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ABSTRACT

Several points need to be addressed when selecting humorous books for children. First, people of all ages react to humor in different ways; therefore, what one child finds funny another may not. Care must therefore be taken in sharing books with and recommending books for children. Second, humor itself is difficult to define, but humor should never be at someone else's expense. Anything that embarrasses, ridicules, or degrades someone else is not humorous. Third, it is healthy to laugh. Research indicates that laughing can help people feel better mentally, emotionally, and physically. Laughter can be wonderful medicine for children. Little children love to act silly, say funny things, and laugh. They need to be able to do this in school. No matter what their cultural or linguistic backgrounds are, laughter is natural for them. Teachers can read funny stories to them and tell them about funny stories that they can read. (A list of six humorous books and a bibliography of 132 humorous books are attached.) (KEH)

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"ALL CHILDREN LIKE TO LAUGH"

Presented at the N.C.T.E. Spring Conference
in Charleston, South Carolina
April 6, 1989

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Do you know what the hat said to the necktie?

"You hang around and I'll go on ahead."

Last week my wife and I were visiting our daughter and son-in-law and their two daughters. The girls are lovely children, but one day they kept saying to me, "Grandpa, make a noise like a frog, make a noise like a frog." Finally I said to them, "Why do you want me to make a noise like a frog?" "Well," they replied, "Grandma says that when you croak we'll all get to go to Hawaii."

Next I'd like to share an example of vile humor as written by Mem Fox in a recent issue of "Language Arts."[1]

Sweet Samantha, Unrefined

When Sweet Samantha eats her food
She is exceptionally rude:
Her mouth is always open wide
So you can see the view inside.
It's not a pretty sight, my friends,
To see how Sammy's dinner ends--
Across her tongue the pieces float
Around her teeth, towards her throat:
You almost vomit while she chews
And tells you all the latest news!
It's terrible when fish and chips
Come shooting forth between her lips
Or when she's eating lamingtons

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[1] Fox, Mem. "Notes from the Battlefield: Towards a Theory of Why People Write." Language Arts, 65 (1988).

And bits of coconut grow wings
And catch you right between the eyes -
Your stomach soon begins to rise!
But scrambled egg is quite the worst:
It looks as though her cheeks will burst
With all the stuff which fills her mouth
From east to west and north to south.
My dears, it is a frightful sight
when Sweet Samantha takes a bite,
So my advice is stand well clear
Especially when she starts to cheer,
And do make sure that you have dined
Before Samantha, unrefined,
Attacks her stew and starts to chew
And sprays her food all over you...

Humorous, or not? That depends on you. There is not a real consensus on what humor is and certainly people react differently to various humorous situations. What one person thinks is funny another would find revolting. Since children are people it stands to reason that they too react to humorous situations in various ways. We need to remember this when selecting humorous books for children. I will discuss this further in a few moments.

How can we define humor? "The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language" explains humor as the quality of being laughable or comical; funniness; something designed to induce

laughter or amusement.

Paul E. McGhee [2] in his study of the origin and development of humor takes the position throughout his book that incongruity comes closest to being the foundation stone of humor. He goes on to say that humor invariably requires a comparison of what is expected and what is encountered instead.

Claudia E. Cornett states, "Today definitions of humor focus mainly on cognitive aspects of what makes us laugh (language play and unlikely visual and auditory images). Yet remaining with us is the idea of humor as something that is ludicrous, incongruous, abnormal, and out-of-the ordinary.[3]

I rather like my own definition which I formulated for my doctoral research back in 1973. I like to think of humor being the quality that makes a person laugh or smile and consequently feel good, even if but for a brief moment of time.

As previously stated, people do not react the same to various humorous situations. So if my definition is valid a bawdy joke would be humorous for some people, but definitely not to others. To me humor is not humor when blue jokes embarrass or exploit others. Humor exercised at someone else's expense isn't really humor. Then it becomes ridicule designed to make fun of someone, teasing - to taunt someone, insulting - to

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[2] McGhee, Paul E. Humor: Its Origin and Development. New York: W.H. Freeman, 1979.

[3] Cornett, Claudia E. Learning Through Laughter: Humor in the classroom. Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1986.

belittle someone, or degrading - to hurt someone.

Recently at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Professor C. David Mortensen gave an assignment to 60 students in an independent study class: Learn what makes people laugh. Go to bars, restaurants, parties, any public, social gatherings in Madison and record on tape - with permission of course - the jokes people tell.

Many of the students were disturbed with what they observed. Some were "shocked at the brutality implicit in much of the humor." It seems that a third of the jokes were ethnic in nature and another third were sexually offensive.

It is crucial then that the humor we present to children does not in any way perpetuate any of the stereotypes found in the Madison research. The humor needs to make the children feel good and happy. This brings me to the next point concerning humor, the need for it.

More and more research is finding out that laughing is good for a person, not only mentally, but physically too.

According to an article by Patricia Long, [4] a psychiatrist at Stanford University Medical School stated that hearty laughter causes huffing and puffing similar to that resulting from exercise. It speeds up heart rate, raises blood pressure, accelerates breathing and increases oxygen consumption. A robust laugh gives the muscles of the face, shoulders, diaphragm and

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[4] Long, Patricia. "Laugh and Be Well?" Psychology Today, Oct. (1987).

abdomen a rigorous workout. With convulsive or sidesplitting laughter, even the leg and arm muscles get involved.

As laughter subsides, a brief period of relaxation sets in. Respiration and heart rate slow, often to below normal levels. Blood pressure drops and muscles relax. Whether it's the arousal, the relaxation or both, says Fry, enough laughter may reduce the risk of heart disease, depression, and other stress-related conditions.

Many of you probably saw the movie about Norman Cousins and the laugh therapy he used to help cure himself of a crippling disease. He turned to good food, vitamins, and funny films to cure himself. Cousins claimed that the mirth generated not only alleviated his pain but led to a natural recovery.

Dr. Donald W. Black of the University of Iowa states, "When you have a hearty laugh, you don't feel pain. That tells us there is something physiological going on in the body."[5] The brain's natural pain suppressants are stimulated when someone laughs.

Now think about yourself. Don't you feel better when you laugh? Shouldn't children feel better when they laugh? Do schoolrooms need to be places of gloom? Don't children face enough stress today without making classrooms unhappy places?

This brings to mind a remedial teacher who worked in my school when I was an elementary school teacher and principal. I never saw this woman smile. The children with whom she worked

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[5] "Be of Good Cheer." Christopher News Notes, 284 (1985).

never smiled either. To this day I believe that this teacher not only made the students feel unhappy, but she always planted a seed in their minds that reading was nothing to feel good about.

The title of this paper is "All Children Like to Laugh". I firmly believe this. Little children love to act silly, say funny things and laugh. They need to be able to do this in school. It is natural for them, no matter what their cultural or linguistic backgrounds are. we can help them to laugh by laughing ourselves and even at ourselves. We can set the mood with the expressions on our faces and the tones in our voices. We can read funny stories to them and tell them about funny stories that they can read. Before sharing a few of my favorite funny stories with you, let me summarize in a few words what I have said about humor.

1. People of all ages react to humor in different ways, therefore what one child finds funny another may not. Care must therefore be taken in sharing books with and recommending books <u>for</u> children.

2. Humor itself is difficult to define, but humor should never be at someone else's expense. Anything that embarrasses, ridicules, or degrades someone else is not humorous.

3. It is healthy to laugh. Research is saying that laughing can help us feel better mentally, emotionally, and physically. Laughter can be wonderful medicine for children.

We need to keep all these points in mind when selecting humorous books for children.

I have selected six books to share with you. These are some of my favorites. I have prepared a bibliography of humorous books for you. I'm sure you will find some of your favorites there. This bibliography covers a wide range of reading abilities. It contains books that consist of humor based mainly upon physical action of some kind and books that derive humor from use of words. Share some of these books with the children you know. Read funny parts to them. Let them read amusing pages to you and the class. Watch the smiles, watch the giggles, and above all, smile yourself, giggle and grin. Let the fun begin!

Since this presentation was about humor I think it appropriate to close with a humorous story. Whether you find it humorous or not, remember now, depends on you.

This is the story about a young girl who entered a very strict religious order. Members were allowed to speak only once every five years and then allowed to only say two words. At the end of the first five years the member appeared before the Superior and was granted permission to speak. She said, "Bed hard," and was dismissed.

Five years later she appeared and was permitted to speak again. This time she said, "Food bad."

Another five years passed and she appeared for the third time. This time she said, "I quit."

The Superior looked at her for a long time and finally said, "I expected this. You have done nothing but complain ever since you've been here."

Children's Books Shared

Konigsburg, E. I. Journey to an 800 Number. Atheneum, 1982.

Noble, Trinka Hakes. Jimmy's Boa Bounces Back. E. P. Dutton, 1984.

Panek, Dennis. Catastrophe Cat. Bradbury Press, 1978.

Paterson, Diane. Smile for Auntie. Dial Press, 1976.

Peck, Robert Newton. Soup. Alfred A. Knopf, 1974.

Wood, Audrey. King Bidgood's in the Bathtub. Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, 1985.

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Christopher News Notes. "Be of Good Cheer", 284 (1985).

Cornett, Claudia E. Learning Through Laughter: Humor in the Classroom, (Bloomington, In., Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1986).

Fox, Mem. "Notes from the Battlefield: Towards a Theory of Why People Write", Language Arts, 65 (Feb., 1988).

Long, Patricia. "Laugh and Be Well?" Psychology Today, (Oct., 1987).

Mc'Ghee, Paul E. Humor: Its Origin and Development, (New York, W.H. Freeman, 1979).

Humorous Children's Books

compiled by

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Revised March 1989

This list should be regarded as a starting point. There are many more humorous books for children with new ones being published every year. It should be noted that authors such as Mayer, Blume, de Paola, Seuss, and Cleary have numerous other humorous books in print. One of their books can easily lead to another.

The books are keyed "P" for picture books and beginning readers,"E" for easy books, and "O" for books for older readers. The lines between classifications are not hard and fast. Some books fall into two classes or even all three.

Allard, Harry. Miss Nelson Has a Field Day. Houghton Mifflin, 1985. (P) Viola Swamp makes quite a football coach.

Allard, Harry. The Stupids Die. Houghton Mifflin, 1981. (P) The Stupids think they have gone to heaven because the lights went out.

Balian, Lorna. The Animal. Abingdon, 1972. (P) This animal is not as scary as it seems.

Balian, Lorna. Humbug Witch. Abingdon, 1965 (P) The little witch had trouble with her potions.

Blume, Judy. Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret Bradbury Press, 1970. (O) Margaret experiences several religions.

Blume, Judy. Superfudge. E. P. Dutton, 1980. (O) Fudge doesn't appreciate the new baby in the family.

Bond, Michael. Paddington Goes to Town. Houghton Mifflin, 1968.
(E) Paddington gives a psychiatrist fits.

Bonsall, Crosby. And I Mean It, Stanley. Harper and Row, 1974.
(P) Who is Stanley ? Does the little girl know?

Bonsall, Crosby. The Amazing, Incredible, Super Dog.
Harper and Row, 1986. (P) Super dog can do only one trick, but he does it well.

Brown, Marc. Arthur's April Fool. Little, Brown, 1983. (P)
Arthur tricks bully Binky Barnes.

Brown, Marcia. Stone Soup. Charles Scribners, 1947. (P,E)
The soldiers figure out how to make some great soup.

Browne, Anthony. Bear Hunt. Atheneum, 1980. (P)
Clever bear draws his way out of trouble.

Byars, Betsy. The Cybil War. Viking, 1981. (O)
The pet show proves embarrassing for Tony.

Cameron, John. If Mice Could Fly. Atheneum, 1979.
(P) If mice could fly they would present some big problems for cats.

Carlstrom, Nancy White. Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?
Macmillan, 1986. (P) Jesse Bear what will you wear at night? Clever verses and great pictures make this book.

Ciardi, John. You Read to Me, I'll Read to You.
J.P. Lippincott, 1962. (O)
Great poems for all ages.

Cleary, Beverly. Ramona Forever.
William Morrow & Co., 1984. (E)
Ramona's friend, Howie, is an unhappy ringbearer at a wedding.

Conford, Ellen. The Revenge of the Incredible Dr. Rancid and His Youthful Assistant, Jeffrey.
Little, Brown, Scholastic, 1980. (O)
Lots of school humor as Jeffrey faces the bully Dewey Belasco.

Corbett, Scott. The Hairy Horror Trick. Little, Brown, 1969.
(E) Kirby mixes up his chemicals causing some problems.

Cresswell, Helen. Ordinary Jack. Macmillan, 1977. (O)
Jack is the ordinary member of a wild and crazy family.

Danziger, Paul. There's a Bat in Bunk Five. Delacorte Press, 1980. (O) Some vulgarities are in this book about Marcy's experiences at summer camp.

dePaola, Tomie. Big Anthony and the Magic Ring. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979. (P)
Big Anthony messes with Stregga Nona's magic.

dePaola, Tomie. The Quicksand Book. Holiday House, 1977. (P)
Scary fun as first the girl, then the boy sink in the quicksand.

DuBois, William Pene. Porko Von Popbutton. Harper and Row, 1968. (E) Porko, because of his size, becomes the hero of the hockey team.

Farley, Carol. Settle Your Fidgets. Atheneum, 1977. (O)
The strict teacher has lice in her wig.

Felton, Harold W. True Tall Tales of Stormalong: Sailor of the Seven Seas. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968. (E)
Stormalong's ship gets stuck in a fog so thick that fish were able to swim in it.

Fleischman, Sid. McBroom's Zoo. Grosset & Dunlap, 1971,72 (E)
McBroom's farm is blown 40 miles across the prairie by a twister.

Flora, James. The Great Green Turkey Creek Monster. Atheneum, 1976 (E)
The Great Green Hooligan vine takes over a whole town.

Freeman, Don. Tilly Witch. Viking Press, 1969. (P)
Tilly Witch had to go back to school to learn how not to be a cheerful witch, especially before Halloween.

Gackenbach, Dick. King Wacky. Crown, 1984. (P)
King Wacky is born with his head on backwards.

Gag, Wanda. Millions of Cats. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1928. (P) An oldie but goodie! The old man comes home with billions of cats.

Galdone, Paul. The Greedy Old Fat Man. Clarion-Ticknor & Fields, Houghton-Mifflin, 1983. (P)
The Fat Man eats a little too much.

Gantos, Jack. Rotten Ralph. Houghton-Mifflin, 1976. (P)
Ralph's disgusting behavior at the circus gets him into trouble.

Gantos, Jack. Rotten Ralph's Trick or Treat. Houghton-Mifflin, 1986. (P) Ralph is rotten at a Halloween Party.

Gardner, Beau. Have You Ever Seen...? Dodd, Mead & Co. 1986. (P) A truly funny ABC book. Examples: O-an octopus eating oatmeal? B-a banana with buttons?

Gondosch, Linda. The Monsters of Marble Avenue. Little Brown, 1988. (E) Luke has many problems trying to arrange his puppet show.

Gounaud, Karen Jo. A Very Mice Joke Book. Houghton-Mifflin, 1981. (E)
Lots of jokes about mice - largest mouse - E. Norm Mouse.

Greene, Constance C. Your Old Pal, Al. Viking Press, 1979. (O)
Sophisticated Polly's snoring bothers Al.

Gwynne, Fred. Chocolate Moose for Dinner. Windmill Wanderer, 1976. (P) Great play on words - undertoe, the arms race, car pools.

Gwynne, Fred. The Sixteen Hand Horse. Prentice-Hall, 1980. (P) Once again Gwynne's great play on words will make children laugh. "Mommy says her nose is running..."

Hass, E.A. Incognito Mosquito Makes History. Random House, 1987. (E) There is a great play on words as Incognito Mosquito becomes involved with Benetick Arnold, Robin Hoodlum, and others.

Hann, Jacquie. Up Day Down Day. Four Winds, 1978. (P)
The hero and Jeremy's days take turns being up and down.

Haywood, Carolyn. Ever Ready Eddie. William Morrow & Co., 1968. (E)
Student council election has lots of humorous action.

Heide, Florence Parry. Banana Twist. Holiday House, 1978. (O)
Jonah can't seem to get away from Goober.

Henkes, Kevin. A Weekend With Wendell. Greenwillow, 1986. (P) Wendell is a real pain for Sophie until it is time for him to leave.

Hicks, Clifford B. The Peter Potts Book of World Records. Henry Holt & Co., 1987. (E) Peter Potts and his friend Joey reach for world records such as building the largest box kite. The results aren't always satisfactory.

Howe, Deborah & James. Bunnicula - A Rabbit Tale of Mystery. Atheneum, 1979. (E)
Bunnicula the bunny appears to be a vampire.

Hughes, Shirley. Another Helping of Chips. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1986. (E)
Chips has to alter the reading on the bathroom scale in order to get obnoxious cousin Waldo to finally leave.

Hurwitz, Johanna. Aldo Applesauce. Morrow, 1979. (E)
Aldo picks up the name "Applesauce" at his new school.

Hurwitz, Johanna. Class Clown. William Morrow & Co., 1987 (E) The class cut-up learns that there is a time and a place for everything.

Hutchins, Pat. 1 Hunter. Greenwillow, 1982. (P)
The hunter's eyes aren't too sharp.

Jones, Rebecca C. Germy Blew It Again. Henry Holt & Co., 1988. (O) Germy schemes to pay off his school debt by selling baby gerbils.

Juster, Norton. The Phantom Tollbooth. Random House, 1961. (O) Milo meets many strange characters while trying to rescue Rhyme and Reason.

Keller, Charles (Compiler). Norma Lee I Don't Knock On Doors. Prentice-Hall, 1983. (E)
Knock, Knock - Who's there?
Cash. --- Cash who?
Are you some kind of nut?

Kellogg, Steven. The Mysterious Tadpole. Dial Press, 1977. (P) This tadpole grows to an enormous size.

Kellogg, Steven. Can I Keep Him? Dial Press, 1971. (P)
Arnold tries to convince his mother that he needs a pet of some kind.

Kennedy, X.J. Brats. Atheneum, 1986. (E)
This collection of poems concerns some rather unkind children. (Brats).

Kent, Jack. The Egg Book. Macmillan, 1975. (P)
The old hen has problems hatching a chick.

Kent, Jack. Joey. Prentice-Hall, 1984. (P)
Joey invites too many friends to play at his place, (his mother's pouch).

Konigsburg, E. I. Journey to an 800 Number. Atheneum, 1982,(O)
Bo travels with his father who makes a living exhibiting his camel at conventions.

Krahn, Fernando. Here Comes Alex Pumpernickel. Little, Brown, 1981.(P) Alex makes a mess no matter what he tries.

Laurin, Anne. Little Things. Atheneum, 1978. (P)
This blanket gets a little too big.

Lindgren, Astrid. Pippi Goes on Board. Viking Press, 1957. (E)
Pippi's adventures include capturing a tiger.

Lindgren, Barbro. Sam's Potty. William Morrow, 1986. (P)
Sam doesn't want to sit on his potty, but his dog helps out.

Lobel, Arnold. Frog & Toad Are Friends. Harper & Row, 1970. (E)
Frog and Toad have a series of five adventures including the problems caused by a lost button.

Lowrey, Lois. Anastasia, Ask Your Analyst. Houghton-Mifflin, 1984.(O) Anastasia's gerbils cause problems.

Marshall, James. George & Martha. Houghton-Mifflin, 1972. (P)
George puts the pea soup he doesn't like into his slippers.

Marshall, James. Wings, A Tale of Two Chickens. Viking Kestrel, 1986. (P) Winnie is not a very sensible chicken. She is saved by sensible Harriet.

Marshall, James. Yummers Too. Houghton Mifflin, 1986. (P)
Emily pig likes to eat a little too much.

Mayer, Mercer. Frog, Where Are You?. Dial, 1969. (P)
It's a job finding frog!

Mayer, Mercer. Winnie the Lovesick Dragon. Macmillan, 1986.
(P,E) Winnie the dragon falls in love with Alfred the Knight,a braggart.

McPhail, David. First Flight. Little, Brown, 1987. (P)
The boy's first plane ride is made more exciting by the antics of his partner, a bear.

Meyer, Franklyn E. Me and Caleb Again. 1969
Follett Publishing Co. (O)
Bud and Caleb put their sister's bikini on their dog.

Milord, Sue and Jerry. Maggie and the Goodbye Gift.
Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1979. (E)
The going away gift proves to be very useful. .

Monsell, Mary Elise. Underwear. Albert Whitman & Co., 1988. (P) Most of the animals liked to wear underwear except for Bismark the buffalo.

Mooser, Stephen. Funnyman's First Case. Franklin Watts, 1981, (E) Archie saves the day with his jokes.

Most, Bernard. Whatever Happened to the Dinosaurs? Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1984. (P) Humorous reasons given for the disappearance of the dinosaurs.

Mowat, Farley. The Dog Who Wouldn't Be. Little, Brown & Co., 1957 (O) Mutt is a great dog who one day retrieves a stuffed bird from a hardware store.

Nixon, Joan. Beats Me, Claude. Viking, Kestrel, 1986. (E) Shirley just can't seem to bake a good apple pie.

Noble, Trinka Hakes. Jimmy's Boa Bounces Back. E. P. Dutton, 1984. (E,P) Jimmy's boa causes a stir at the garden club meeting.

Noble, Trinka Hakes. The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash. Dial Press, 1980. (P) Jimmy's boa causes a commotion, especially when he eats Mrs. Stanley's wash!

Oakley, Graham. Henry's Quest. Atheneum, 1986. (O) Beautiful pictures tell of Henry's quest for gasoline.

Panek, Dennis. Catastrophe Cat. Bradbury Press, 1978. (P) Catastrophe Cat has some wild adventures but makes it home safely.

Panek, Dennis. Catastrophe Cat at the Zoo. Bradbury Press, 1979. (P) Catastrophe Cat has a wild time at the zoo.

Parish, Peggy. Amelia Bedelia and the Baby. Greenwillow, 1981. (E) Amelia Bedelia is once again confused by words.

Parish, Peggy. Amelia Bedelia's Family Album. Greenwillow, 1988. (E) This time Amelia describes her odd family members such as the loafer who makes loaves of bread and the big game hunter who collects games.

Parker, Nancy Winslow. Poofy Loves Company. Dodd, Mead, 1980. (P) Poofy is a big white dog who causes problems but likes company.

Paterson, Diane. Smile for Auntie. Dial Press, 1976. (P) Auntie tries everything to make baby smile.

Pearson, Susan. Saturday I Ran Away. J. B. Lippincott, 1981. (E) Emily wants to run away, but so does the rest of the family.

Pearson, Susan. The Day Porkchop Climbed the Christmas Tree. Prentice-Hall, 1987. (P) Porkchop the cat caused a lot of trouble, especially when she climbed the Christmas tree.

Peck, Robert Newton. Soup. Alfred A. Knopf, 1974. (O) Soup and Robert have many adventures including rolling down a hill in a barrel.

Peck, Robert Newton. Trig Sees Red. Little, Brown, 1978.(O) Pop the Cop loses his job to the new traffic light, and this bothers Trig.

Pinkwater, Daniel. Aunt LuLu. Macmillan, 1988. (P) Aunt LuLu, the librarian, decides to leave Alaska for New Jersey. Her 14 Alaskan huskies accompany her.

Pinkwater, Daniel. The Big Orange Spot. Hastings House, 1977. (E,P) All the houses in Mr. Plumbean's block are painted in colorful ways.

Pinkwater, Daniel. The Muffin Fiend. Lothrop-Lee and Shepard, 1986. (E) Inspector LeChat was called to Vienna to discover why all the muffins were disappearing throughout Europe.

Raskin, Ellen. The Mysterious Disappearance of Leon (I Mean Noel). E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1971. (O) Leon or Noel disappears. Clues are discovered to help find him.

Rinkoff, Barbara. Elbert, the Mind Reader. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., 1967. (E) Elbert's filled tooth makes him a mind reader.

Robertson, Keith. Henry Reed's Baby-Sitting Service. The Viking Press, 1966. (E,O) Henry and Midge have problems with their baby-sitting business.

Robinson, Barbara. The Best Christmas Pageant Ever. Avon Books, 1972. (E,O) The horrible Herdman children make the Christmas pageant a memorable one.

Rockwell, Thomas. How to Eat Fried Worms. Franklin Watts, 1973. (E,O) Billy bets his friend that he can eat 15 worms.

Rodgers, Mary. Freaky Friday. Harper & Row, 1972. (O) Annabel wakes up to find her 13 year old mind in her mother's body.

Rogers, Paul. Tumbledown. Atheneum, 1988. (P) The Village of Tumbledown decides to spruce up for the prince is coming for a visit.

Rosen, Winifred. Henrietta & the Gong from Hong Kong. Four Winds Press, 1981. (E) Henrietta has lots of problems, especially when she knocks her grandfather's huge gong off the wall.

Roser, Wiltrud. Lena & Leopold. Margaret K. McElderry, 1987. (P) Why wouldn't Leopold the cat play with the toy mouse?

Ross, Tony. Meanwhile - Back at the Ranch. Dial, 1987. (P) While Rancher Hicks is visiting the dead town of Sleepy Gulch , his wife is having all kinds of good fortune.

Samuels, Barbara. Duncan and Dolores. Bradbury Press, 1986. (P) Dolores's new cat, Duncan, ignores her until she ignores Duncan.

Scheler, Michael and Frankel, Julie. Whole Mirth Catalog. Franklin Watts, 1978. (O)
This is a collection of absurdities in ads, foods, movies, magazines and other things.

Schultz, Sam. 101 Monster Jokes. Lerner Publications, 1982. (E) All these jokes deal with monsters.

Schwartz, Alvin. Ten Copycats in a Boat. Harper & Row, 1980. (E) Lots of riddles to keep one guessing.

Seuss, Dr. Green Eggs and Ham. Random House, 1960. (P, E) Typical Seuss book where the main character changes his mind about green eggs and ham.

Sharmat, Mitchell. Gregory, the Terrible Eater. Four Winds Press, 1980. (P)
Gregory is a goat who wants orange juice and eggs for breakfast instead of tin cans and bottle caps.

Shaw, Nancy. Sheep in a Jeep. Houghton-Mifflin, 1986. (P) The sheep driving the jeep gets stuck in the mud.

Silverstein, Shel. A Giraffe and a Half. Harper & Row, 1964. (P) This giraffe grows to a giraffe and a half, then shrinks back to a giraffe.

Spier, Peter. Oh, Were They Ever Happy! Doubleday & Co., 1978. (P) The Noonan children really paint the house!

Steig, William. Dr. DeSoto. Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1982. (P,E) Dr. DeSoto as a dentist and a mouse has a problem when a fox comes to him with a toothache.

Stine, Jovial Bob & Jane. The Sick of Being Sick Book. E. P. Dutton, 1980. (O)
Jokes, stories, recipes, games, tricks, and drawings make up this book for kids.

Taylor, Mark. Mr. Pepper Stories. Atheneum, 1984. (E)
Incompetent Mr. Pepper tries to be a "Mr. Fix It".

Turkle, Brinton. Deep in the Forest. E. P. Dutton, 1976. (P)
The baby bear cub causes a ruckus in the pioneer family's log cabin.

Ungerer, Tomi. The Beast of Monsieur Racine. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1971. (P,E)
A strange creature steals the pears from Monsieur Racine's tree.

Viorst, Judith. Alexander & the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day. Atheneum, 1972. (P,E)
Nothing goes right for Alexander.

Waber, Bernard. But Names Will Never Hurt Me. Houghton-Mifflin, 1976. (E)
Alison Wonderland's name causes her problems.

Waber, Bernard. You Look Ridiculous. Houghton-Mifflin, 1966. (P,E) The hippo comes to realize how wonderful it is to be a hippo.

Wahl, Jan Rabbits on Roller Skates. Crown, 1986. (P)
The rabbits on roller skates cause quite a commotion as they roll through town.

Weiss, Leatie. My Teacher Sleeps in School. Frederick Warne, 1984. (P) The characters (all elephants) think their teacher sleeps in school until she proves them wrong.

White, Florence. How to Lose Your Lunch Money. Ward Ritchie Press, 1970. (P) Typical story of the boy who messes around in school only to lose his lunch money.

Willard, Nancy. Simple Pictures Are Best. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1976. (P,E)
The bull gets in on the picture.

Williams, Barbara. Jeremy Isn't Hungry. E. P. Dutton, 1978. (P) Jeremy decides on where he wants to eat.

Winter, Paula. The Bear & the Fly. Crown, 1976. (P)
Papa Bear wrecks the house trying to kill a pesky fly.

Wood, Audrey. King Bidgood's in the Bathtub. Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich, 1985. (P) King Bidgood loves his bathtub.

Wood, Audrey. The Napping House. Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich, 1984. (P)
Cumulative story of a napping house with a cozy bed, granny, child, dog, cat, mouse, and flea.

Zemach, Margot. The Judge. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1969. (P)
The judge doesn't listen until it's too late.

Zion, Gene. Harry by the Sea. Harper & Row, 1965. (P)
Harry, a black and white dog, is covered with seaweed and looks like a monster.